1:Radin E-5 (1908-1913) 1923
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Should they ever have a bad illness
they have the means of obtaining life by praying for it,[a] by offering 796x
tobacco and a flute.[b] 539x

"Disease-giver himself made these things holy. Thus they would 782
obtain life, if they had any illness, by offering you reed flutes, food, 776
tobacco, feathers, a white dog, and by making you at the same time an offering of buckskin hides. (Thus Disease-giver spoke to our grandfather when he blessed him:) 'A holy flute I made for you, and I forbade you to blow upon it, yet you did it. Now, hereafter, if you offer me a sufficient number of buckskins, you may blow upon it. A different life from that of others will you lead, if you do that. You will be able to cut off (stop) a bad disease caused by someone else. Nor will this one (who was ill) ever have another disease.'[c]

"Thus Disease-giver spoke. This is what the one who causes disease said. That is how they blessed our grandfather Djôhenagiwi'ąxga. A song I am now about to start. War-bundle owners who are seated here, I greet you." (Disease-giver song.)

Host's fourth speech.—"War-bundle owners who are seated here, 796x
I greet you. The last (song) we will now finish. You who are in the 539x
east, Night Spirits, you also added your blessing to the spirit bundle 787
of grandfather Djôhenagiwi'ąxga. So that he might know (be 776
blessed by) the spirits, grandfather Djôhenagiwi'ąxga starved and thirsted himself to death[d] and made himself pitiable. At first he fasted four nights and the Night Spirits came to him; with mighty sounds they came.[e] There they stood (and said), 'Human, you have thirsted yourself to death and we bless you (for that reason). We who speak are the spirits who are called Night Spirits.' They blessed him with war power and life, they said. Then he looked and (said to himself), 'I wonder whether these really are the Night Spirits that speak.' So he looked at them and they were small birds called *hoc'ppc*.[f] They had fooled him. Then once again was his heart sore. 'Well! I will die,' he thought (fasting). So he fasted again and once again he rubbed on (the charcoal). For six nights he continued to fast. And again from the east the Night Spirits came. They came making a great noise and they stood near him (and said), 'Human, we bless you. You have thirsted yourself to death and you have made your heart sore. We felt sad on your account. With

[a] A rather curious expression used only in elevated language and meaning, literally, "to obtain with the mouth"—i. e., either by speaking, prayers, or singing. The expression would hardly be permitted in ordinary Winnebago. [715]

[b] He does not mean by offering flutes, but by playing on them. Reed flutes are generally contained in the bundles of most spirits, but they seem to be more closely connected with the Disease-giver and the Buffalo. [534]

[c] This, I believe, is the meaning of the last three sentences. They are somewhat obscure, and I do not guarantee the correctness of the rendering.

[d] Ritualistic expression for fasting.

[e] All powerful spirits are supposed to approach with loud noises. This is also characteristic of the Ojibwa spirits. [171]

[f] English equivalent unknown.

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Then another man who has been called upon for a kettle rises as the "means of blessing" comes to him and greeting, says to them.[94]

Speech of fifth guest. "Clan councilors who are seated here, I greet you all. You all within this lodge who are impersonating the spirits, I greet you. It is good. If we say it is good, we mean it.[95] That we are living[96] is because they have done this for us (i. e., asked us to participate in the feast). That we have been able to move about so long (i. e., are still living) is due to the fact that the war-bundle owners knew how to offer tobacco to the spirits. It is for that reason likewise that we have not been killed. Expert in their preaching to the youths and maidens, our chiefs have also kept the fireplace for us two-legged walkers.[97] Our chiefs have piled more fuel upon the fire that it may start up.[98] And not for themselves are they doing this. What they are doing is to enable us to obtain life. The name of South Wind they have uttered; he who above is in control of life. They know that he was a great (spirit). An old man, one who was like a spirit (in his power), called Djôbenagjwi'exga, they are speaking of. As many good spirits as there are, that many added their thoughts (power). Of this they are reminding the spirits whom they are worshiping. Sincerely are they saying it. The life they blessed the old man with, that life they are using. With war powers they blessed him. They did not fool him. Because they have made their requests sincerely is the reason that (the spirits) have given them these things in return. I feared that they might not take cognizance of them (i. e., their offerings). However, now I thank them (the host, etc.), for we have been as though connected with war power and life through South Wind. Tobacco they have poured for him, and white buckskin and red feathers have they extended to him. He will smoke the tobacco and we will follow in the path of life as a consequence. As though we were a member of their clan they have made us by (permitting us) to impersonate the spirits. What we have done will give us plenty of life to live on and for this we are indebted to them. We are thankful for it. Those who have been preached to, the South Wind I greet. Councilor (host), I send forth my greetings to you. You who are seated here and are impersonating the spirits, to you also do I send forth my greetings."

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[94] By "the means of blessing" he means the opportunity to speak and say.

[95] Literally, "It is not for nothing that we say this."

[96] I. e., have been blessed with life.

[97] The reference to the fireplace is twofold here. First as host it is incumbent for the owner of the Thunderbird clan bundle to take charge of the fireplace; and, secondly, it is his duty to do so because fire is the sacred possession of the clan. "Two-legged walkers" is the ritualistic name for human beings.

[98] To be taken figuratively as meaning "blessings," since in adding fuel they are cooking the sacred food.

§1. *Early Childhood*

Father and mother had four children and after I was born. An uncle of my mother named White Cloud spoke to her before I was born and told her, "You are about to give birth to a child who will not be an ordinary individual." These were the words he addressed to her. It was then that my mother gave birth to me. As soon as I was born, indeed as I was being washed—as my neck was being washed—I laughed out loudly.

I have been told [1] that I was a good-tempered child.

During childhood my father told me to fast and I obeyed him. Throughout the winter, every morning, I would get up very early, crush charcoal, and then blacken my face with it. As soon as the sun rose would I go outside and there gazing steadily at the sun, make my prayer to the spirits, crying.[2]

[1] Whenever the writer refers to events that happened before his time or before he could remember things, he always uses the quotative, "It is said."

[2] This refers to the custom of fasting of which many examples will be found later on. Among the Winnebago and many culturally related tribes, every person, male and female, was expected, between the ages of five and twelve, to seek communion with some supernatural spirit and the spirit so obtained was supposed to grant the suppliant certain powers and in general preside over his destinies throughout life. The proper manner of approaching this ordeal was to blacken one's face with charcoal and retire at night to some semi-deserted place at some distance from the house and there pray-

Early Childhood

In the fall of the year we would pick cranberries. When the hunting season was open, I would begin to fast again.

This was my life for a number of years.

After a while we bought a pony on which we used to pack all our belongings whenever we moved our camp. In addition three of us would ride on top of the pack. Sometimes my mother and sometimes my father drove the pony.

After I had grown a little older and taller all of us brothers would fast together. My father would indeed repeatedly urge us to fast. "Do not be afraid of the burnt remains of the lodge center-pole," he would say to us.[5] "Whatever are the true possessions of men, the apparel of men and the gift of doctoring—all these things that are spread out before you—do try and obtain one of them."[6] Thus he would speak to us.

I would then take a piece of charcoal, crush it and blacken my face and he would be very grateful to me

I would at first break my fast at noon but then gradually I began to fast all night. From the fall of the year until spring I would fast until nightfall and then eat. After a while I trained myself to pass the night without eating and after that I was able to go two nights and days without taking any food. Then my mother went to the woods at some distance from the

[5] Symbolical manner of describing the crushed charcoal with which fasters must blacken their faces.

[6] By "possessions of men" he means mainly that knowledge which will make a man honored and respected in his community; and by "apparel of men," he means power and ability.

Crashing Thunder

*159 755 [782] Once when I was sick he[1] treated me. As soon as he came my father arose with tobacco in his hands and made him an offering, greeting him as follows:

"My son-in-law, tobacco do I offer you and I make offerings to your spirits. You have made your hat ' become holy, for the various spirits made it sacred. I greet you."

*159 755 787 756 [776] Before treating me Thunder Cloud told of his fasting experience:

At the very beginning those above taught me the following. All the various spirits who live up above in the clouds, in a doctor's village, came after me and instructed me in what I was to do. They taught me and told me the following. "Here let us try it," they said to me. There in the middle of the lodge lay a rotten log, almost entirely covered with weeds. They tried to make me treat this log. I breathed upon it and all those who were in this spirit lodge also breathed upon it. Then for the second time I breathed upon it and they with me. Then for the third and the fourth time I did it. After the fourth time the rotten log arose and walked away. Then the spirits said to me, "Human being, very holy indeed are you."

There from the middle of the ocean, from the shaman's village, they came after me. They blessed me, all the spirits in the middle of the ocean. They made me try my power. As many waves as exist, all of them as large as the ocean, upon these they asked me to blow; and as I blew upon them everything became as quiet as the water in a small saucer. So they became. Then I blew for the

[195] ' Symbolical expression for the various objects and blessings bestowed upon him by the spirits.

1 [i.e., his brother-in-law Thunder Cloud who was a shaman--analyst]

My Brother-in-Law Thunder Cloud

You said that I could use all the best herbs that grow upon you, and that I would always be able to effect cures with them. I beseech you for those herbs now and I ask you to help me to cure this sick man. 159* 755 782 816 818 [539]

Then Thunder Cloud breathed upon me and squirted some water on my chest. "What I have said is very true and very holy, I believe," he said. "Indeed now you will get well."

Thunder Cloud knew all the good medicines that exist and he used them in order to heal me and so that I might recover from my illness. I got well. Indeed Thunder Cloud was holy.

Thunder Cloud was also what we call a poisoner. He used to travel at dead of night, it was said. One night at about eleven o'clock he got ready to poison a family by the name of B. We were all listening, sitting in our lodge. Then outside we heard him make some noise. We were afraid of him because we knew he was a poisoner. Indeed he claimed to be in control of our household. My family would do nothing without first consulting him, for we were afraid of him. We believed that he had come from the spirits, that he was a reincarnated man and, if displeased, would poison us. So whatever he asked we did. 159* 754

He had been married to my eldest sister and after her death wished to marry the second sister. Where he had come from at the dwelling-place of Earth-maker,* my elder sister was now staying, he said. But now he claimed that the second sister resembled the 159* 756

* Circumlocution for saying that she was dead.

[195]

§7. *The Teachings of My Father*

My father used to keep up the old habit of teaching us the customs of the Winnebago. He would wake us up early in the morning and, seated around the fireplace, speak to us. The girls would be taught separately. Now this is what my father told me:

I

My son, when you grow up, see to it that you are of some benefit to your fellowmen. There is only one way in which you can aid them and that is by fasting. Our grandfather, the Fire, he who stands at all times in the center of our dwelling, sends forth all kinds of blessings. Be sure that you make an attempt to obtain his.

My son, do you remember to have our grandfathers, the war chiefs,[14] bless you. See to it that they have compassion upon you. Then some day as you travel along the road of life, you will know what to do and encounter no obstacles. Without any effort will you then be able to gain the prize you desire. The honor will be yours to glory in, yours without exertion. All the disposable war-blessings belong to our grandfathers, the war-controllers, and if reverently you fast and thirst yourself to death, then these will be bestowed upon you. Yet if you do not wear out your feet in frequent journeyings to and fro, if you do not blacken your face with charcoal, it will be all for naught that you

[14] Symbolical name for all those spirits who were supposed to be in control of war powers.

7:Radin E-5 (ca. 1912) 1926 NP12 Winnebago NP12

selves connected with life by means of that organ which Earthmaker gave us as a measure of things.[21] I send forth my greetings to you all.

Then he who was impersonating the Disease-Giver spoke:

War-bundle owners, relatives seated around here, I greet you all. This is indeed a marvelous performance that we have witnessed and he who was able to do it must surely be a marvelous man. Very few people listen to the advice of their parents but he must have been one who did and that is why he has done so well. The members of his clan have been sincerely worshiping the spirits. He who originally made this war-bundle ritual was like a spirit in power and what he told them to do they are doing in every detail. It is good work they are doing. Sufficient food are they offering to those in control of war powers for the spirits easily to take cognizance of it. They have placed ample tobacco and different kinds of buckskin within reach of the spirits. To you, O Disease-Giver, a pleasing white buckskin has been strung out in offering and with it a pleasing red feather as a hair ornament. How indeed would it be possible for the spirits not to recognize these offerings? And if they recognize them then we who are impersonating the spirits, will also receive the benefit of the blessings of war and life, extended to the host.

Long ago our ancestors asked the spirits to bless them so that then they might live happily. Here we are sitting around the fireplace and the life that the host and his friends have asked for, the spirits are not merely extending to them

[21] A very curious circumlocution for stomach. He means, of course, all the food that has been eaten.

8:Lurie E-5 (1945-1950)1953 NP12 Winnebago NP12

The Winnebago term for berdache is very uncertain. The last known case in Wisconsin was called dejáŋčowiŋga, usually translated as Blue Lake Woman (dejáŋčowiŋga—dejáŋ: lake or sea; čo: blue; wiŋ: female name ending; ga: name referrent suffix). In Nebraska mention was made of another berdache who had lived in Wisconsin and was called čoranaǯiŋga or Standing Blue (čoranaǯiŋga—čo: blue; ra: article; naǯi: to stand; wiŋ: elided with naǯi as naziŋ, female name ending; ga: name referrent suffix). The term šiáŋge was suggested as a general word for berdache by two Wisconsin informants, and it was translated by several people as "a no good," "a eunuch," "an unmanly man." This word was still in common use in Wisconsin in 1947, but was used among young men as an insult or teasing epithet. These young men claimed to know nothing more about the word except that it carried connotations of weakness and effeminateness.

The characteristics of the Winnebago berdache agree closely with those reported for the Omaha and Ponca but the word used to designate a berdache in both of these latter tribes was mi^{a}-qu-ga, according to Dorsey (378–379). Among the Oglala the berdache had been blessed by a pote wi^{a}kte or hermaphroditic buffalo, wi^{a}kte being the word for berdache. A certain amount of shame had become attached to the role among these Plains Siouan groups by the time it was reported by Dorsey in 1889 and Wissler in 1912, but Wissler (p. 92) said of the Oglala, "In the old days all the berdaches were very wakan."

Knowledge of the berdache among the Winnebago was provided in 1946 through a chance conversation with M.M., a woman who was then about thirty years old. Her parents had been the first Christian converts at the Winnebago community near Black River Falls, Wisconsin, and M.M. had once heard her mother mention "Men who dressed as women." When M.M. attempted to question her mother, at the writer's request, for more information about the berdache, the mother, then a woman in her seventies, became very angry and said in Winnebago, "Why did you ask about that? That is something we want to forget and not talk about."

Another woman, S.S., a younger sister of Radin's famous informant Crashing Thunder, was next approached and she offered the following account.

> Yes, I used to hear about that, but I don't know much about it. Once there was a man who fasted and he learned that if he dressed like a woman he would be the richest person in the world, but if he wore men's clothes, he die soon. She wore earrings, and bracelets, and necklaces and a shirt like a woman, but his brothers told him . . . her? . . . if he . . . she? . . . put on a skirt they would kill him. There used to be people like that, not just that one. I think šiáŋge is the word for them but I don't know, now it's just a slang word and means a no good. Those people did women's work, and they did it real good, better than even women could.

Later M.M., the original informant, was able to prevail upon her mother to provide more information. Her description included all of the points given above except mention of wealth accruing to the berdache. However, M.M.'s mother added that berdaches had been blessed by the moon and had the gift